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No Holdback on Ayres' Films

Quebec Indies Found Group

Official information from Montreal Independent exhibitors is to the effect that a meeting of wholly unaffiliated Independent Exhibitors was held in Montreal recently at which time a new Association was formed, comprising of "bona fide" Independents only, organized under the name of Independent Motion Picture Exhibitors Association of Quebec.

The aims and purposes of the Quebec Association are similar in principle to those of the Ontario

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New Distrib Plan for USA

After a long period of general discussion in an endeavour to find a substitute plan for the present Blocks of Five distribution method, the trade practice committee of the United Motion Picture Industry has presented a scheme to the trade for approval.

Stymied for a while over the problem of cancellations, the exhibitors and the producers finally worked out an arrangement agreeable to the negotiators. And, ac-

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All-Shorts Program

The first all-shorts theatre program opened on Broadway last week at the Broadway Theatre under the general title of "Prize Package" and was well received by critics and public.

The show, one and three-quarter hours long, consists of MGM shorts, the best of the past few years having been selected. The house operates on a 55-cent top. The policy is being watched and if it succeeds it is likely to be imitated everywhere.

Regal Will Continue Distributing As Early Objections Fade Out

From indications at the moment it appears that the future of the "Dr. Kildare" series will not be affected by Lew Ayers declared objections to military service. The first reactions came from exhibitors trying to guess the public mind and resulted in many cancellations. In Eastern Canada some bookings on the Kildare pictures, in which Ayres stars, were withdrawn though his pictures then showing were allowed to finish their runs.

After the initial shock of Ayres' stand diminished and a certain amount of public indifference became apparent, MGM defended its right to continue distribution. Hedda Hopper, screen commentator, while not defending Ayres' stand, maintained that he had the right to take it.

MGM intends continuing the

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More Than One Drama in Theatre

When Columbia's "49th Parallel" played Shea's, Toronto, a lady approached manager Fred Trebilcock and asked if he could slow the film down at a certain spot. It seems that her son, who had been lost overseas, appeared in one of the shots of soldiers. The mother had seen the picture seven times.

Fred explained why the request wasn't possible but gave the lady permission to drop in at any time during the run and stay as long as she liked.

Columnist Jack Karr of the Toronto Daily Star picked up the story and we borrowed it from him.

Kurk to Sudbury

John Kurk, well-known in Winnipeg and the West as a manager, joins Max Phillips at the Regent, Sudbury, Ontario, as assistant-manager. The Regent is operated by 20th Century Theatres.

Durbin Plans Three

To make up for Deanna Durbin's three months of idleness, Universal is preparing three stories with the view of keeping her busy for a long stretch. Her starter will be "Three Smart Girls Join Up," a Bruce Manning production. The two other stories are "They Lived Alone" and "Birthday," which Dwight Taylor will produce.

Cagneys Now On Their Own

With the ink just about dry on the long-term contract signed by James and William Cagney with United Artists, the newly launched Cagney Productions, Inc., owned by the famous film brothers, is already negotiating for studio sound stages, stories and talent in anticipation of a November 1 release.

Although he is part owner, Jimmy will still confine his activities to acting as he has been doing with brief interruption these past

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Sabu at Work

The star of "Jungle Boy," Sabu, goes into Universal's "Arabian Nights," a Walter Wanger production.

Republic's St. Nazaire

Republic, under the title of "Suicide Ship," will base a film on the recent Commando raid on St. Nazaire, Nazi U-boat base in Occupied France.

Cooper to UA?

Rumor has Gary Cooper, film star, heading his own production unit at United Artists soon. His contract with Sam Goldwyn expires in September.

Terry Turner, RKO Exploiter, Sings "The Box Office Blues"

This town is different.

The papers here are tough.

The theatres won't spend a dime.

The picture lacks sumpin'.

If it's a good picture you do business. If it ain't, you don't.

If they would only leave me do it my way.

I'll take one, but only to keep you company.

Yeah, I did good, but we shoulda done better.

She's poison in my house.

Criticisms don't mean nothin' in this town.

You oughta have some new faces, but new faces don't mean nuthin' at my box office.

I learnt the business from the bottom up! I was the first to give away dishes in this town and I started bank night here.

Look at them plaques on the wall and I ask you, "What does they get me?"

None of them New York and Hollywood art ads for me. Give me a pair of scissors and I do my own.

I'm telling you they got office boys for managers.

I broke my boss in the business and now he gives me the woiks.

SIDNEY SCHREIBER IN TORONTO

Sidney Schreiber, Hays Office solicitor, spent a day in Toronto last week studying the application and effect of Canada's price ceiling on the motion picture business. He conferred with Col. John A. Cooper of MPDA and exchange heads. Price ceiling has been proposed for the United States.

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Our Job

Cecile B. DeMille, the famed director, is a mighty handy man with a pen as well as a camera. At a recent banquet in his honor he got off some choice words about the ideals of the industry and the state of things. Said DeMille:

The job of motion pictures is to help bring home a full realization of this crisis and of the deadly peril that lurks in internal squabbles.

Hitler and the Mikado think they can conquer the world, but we, motion pictures, have already conquered it. We have invaded every country, not to bring it death and destruction, or to take from it its wealth, but to bring it our wealth, which is humor and drama, and science and art.

We have invaded, not with armed forces and smashing tanks, but with romance and music and beauty.

Today motion pictures hold the same place in the war effort that a standard bearer does in an army.

Ours is the task of holding high and ever visible the values that everyone is fighting for. I don't mean flag-waving, but giving the embattled world sharp glimpses of the way of life that we've got to hang on to in spite of everything.

As for the future of the motion picture industry, your guess is as good as mine. But whatever its future may be, it's bound up with a free America.

DeMille on Freedom

Freedom is a simple word, and so familiar—so familiar that, like the mainspring of a clock, we're not conscious of it until it stops.

Freedom is blessing that we take so much for granted that we don't appreciate it any more than we did our automobile tires.

We just can't conceive of not being allowed to speak as we please, to work as we please, to read what we please, to listen to whatever radio program we please, and to kneel to the God who made us, in whatever church we please. . . .

Liberty is a woman, ladies and gentlemen—a beautiful, desirable and very jealous woman.

No woman likes to be taken for granted.

Look at her out there in your harbor.

No Hollywood glamour girl can equal her attraction as she stands there holding her torch aloft, with the ocean at her feet, and the stars in her hair.

She's not to be won by idlers—nor held by complacency. She is America's sweetheart, and she demands a courageous offensive against hate—and cruelty—and the barbarism of hell, itself.

An offensive against the forces that are pledged to destroy us. And the world's liberty is with us.

She demands an offensive against intolerance and bigotry. An offensive against the savage dictators—and the petty racketeers who would be dictators. She demands an offensive that combines the pride of the past—with the might of the present—to end, for all time invasion against the rights of the free men, who protest their love for her.

Those are her terms, and none but the brave deserve the fair.

No Letup on Ayres' Films

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distribution of the Ayres pictures on hand, since there has been very little organized opposition in the United States and Canada. William R. Rogers, vice-president in charge of sales, put forth a powerful argument for them when he said: "After all, many individuals have been active in the making of these films besides Lew Ayres and it is not right that they should arbitrarily be cancelled." None of the Ayres pictures reflect in any way his convictions about war.

By and large, said Mr. Rogers, "the number of theatres requesting release from their contracts is few. And in view of the fact that the large public attracted to the Dr. Kildare pictures does not wish to be deprived of this latest in the series, it may be said that those exhibitors who have cancelled the film are perhaps acting hastily.

"We have conducted a survey in the last few days, through impartial checking services and theatre managers, with investigators sitting in the audiences and interviewing patrons at the end of the performance in the lobbies.

"Typical of reports are the following: From New Orleans the Paramount Theatre, at Gulfport, did a normal business, with no adverse comments from an audience well sprinkled with soldiers; at the Circle Theatre, New Orelans, 'People Vs. Dr. Kildare' was generously applauded at the close. Similar reactions were voiced from Sedalia, Missouri; Providence, R. I.; Springfield, Mass.; Buffalo and Rochester, New York, three districts in Oklahoma and several more in Missouri. In five situations in Pittsburgh there were no adverse comments, with business normal. In eight theatres checked for comments in Cleveland, seven had none and in one theatre there were some telephone objections. In Arkansas, the Conway Theatre, at Little Rock, reported attendance above average, with no adverse criticism. In the Denver district several runs there report that there was no adverse reaction when Ayres appeared on the screen. In nine situations in Chicago, in no case was there any comment or adverse criticism by the audience either in the theatre or going out. The same conditions were reported from Omaha.

"We have two films in which Lew Ayres will appear in the immediate future. One of them, 'Fingers at the Window,' will shortly play at the Criterion Theatre, in New York. It had been erroneously reported that this booking was cancelled."

New Distrib Plan for USA

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cording to William F. Rodgers, chairman of the committee, the plan as agreed upon, is the best possible under the circumstances.

Specifically, the plan to go into effect in September provides for four groups of pictures per year, each group to consist of not more than 12 pictures, five of which are to be trade shown or previewed, and the other seven are to be identified by stars, featured players, original stories, or well-known books or plays on which the films are based. This abolishes blind selling.

As for cancellation privileges, the bone of contention, the plan stipulates that cancelled pictures from one block may not be included in the next and applies only to identified pictures. This corrects the lack of cancellation under the present decree. But now, with a new deal, the theatres will be able to cancel from 10 to 20 per cent of a company's output, that is, one picture may be cancelled by exhibitors paying from $101 to $200 rental fees, and two pictures may be cancelled by those paying from $1 to $100 rentals.

Other phases covered by the new plan are reduction of pictures produced due to war emergencies, distribution of Westerns, which may be sold in blocks of six, unseen by the exhibitor, and identified by the star only, and special features, which are not to be included in the blocks of 12 and which may be sold separately.

The plan is now being submitted to New York exhibitor groups for approval, and if passed by them will be submitted to the Department of Justice's motion picture division, which has the final word.

The new plan will govern the practices of the Big Five in the motion picture field—MGM, Warner Brothers, Paramount, 20th Century-Fox and RKO.

The Boston City Council has just voted unanimously to have the city censor to cancel the license of any house showing an Ayres film.

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Quebec Indies Found Group

(Continued from Page 1)

and other Provincial Independent Associations. It intends to relate itself to Government authority in accordance with the regulations of the Wartime Prices and Trade Board, and to become allied to the National Council of Independent Exhibitors of Canada.

Provisional Officers are as follows: Mr. C. O. Auclair, President, Mr. J. S. Dunning, Vice-President, and Mr. L. K. Jones, Secretary-Treasurer, and at a subsequent meeting to be held shortly, a full Board of five or seven Directors will be elected.

Amongst the original founders were: Messrs. A. E. Gregoirs, S. J. Dunning, Paul Cardinal, Rolland Cardinal, C. O. Auclair, John Dufour, Mr. Duhamel, and L. K. Jones.

Barnett E. Laxer of Toronto, President of the Independent Motion Picture Exhibitors Asociation of Ontario, member of the National Council of Independent Exhibitors of Canada, and member of the National Advisory Board, cooperated in the formation of the Association, and attended the organizational meeting. In addressing the meeting, Laxer stated that the Wartime Prices and Trade Board was not a cure-all for all the ills of the industry, that the primary purposes of the Board was towards nullifying inflationary tendencies as the result of the war, and that its supervisory powers are now outlined are only in accordance in maintaining conditions which prevailed as of the basic period.

Laxer stated that he anticipates a new social and business culture based on justice and broad reason will follow the successful outcome of the war, and that Independent exhibitors are well advised to organize themselves now, for such unified action as is timely at present, and for the future. He cautioned the organization to consider their meetings as a laboratory for discussing, testing and achieving ways and means of attaining unity and gainful business to each on a basis of "Live and let live" with the thought uppermost in mind that each exhibitor must firstly consider it his duty to do all in his power towards the winning of the war.

The meeting was unanimous in that its membership will comprise only of such exhibitors within the Province of Quebec as are absolutely unaffiliated with circuit interests.

Rehearsal for Victory

Though the greatest contribution of the motion picture is its effect on morale, there is no doubt that the most lasting one is the newsreel. After the last war the written record was far greater than the visual one. When war is at last outlawed future generations, even if no armed conflict has stained their times, will realize the tragic result of resorting to weapons through the exact presentation of the motion picture in preference to the fugitive quality of words. Words become meaningless when their absorption has no dramatic support. Pictures never lose their impact.

It was through the use of the documentary film, a form of newsreel, that the Nazis were able to freeze with fear many opposing diplomats of then neutral countries. It is through the use of the same class of picture that the United Nations are able to inspire their supporters to greater efforts. In this field Canada, with our National Film Board, stood almost alone.

The hisses and cheers that greeted various political leaders before the war was a prelude to armed action. Even silence is a powerful demonstration of feeling. The war has reached the movie house in more ways than one. The most recent report along this line deals with the attack of Irish Republicans on a theatre in Belfast, in which British and American troops were about to be entertained.

Newsreel houses in occupied countries are the best barometers of public feeling. In a Danish theatre a shot showed Hitler stepping into an airplane. From the dark house came a shout: "Remember me to Hess!" The lights went up and the audience was offered their money back.

"No thanks," were the answers, "we've had a grand time."

Observanda

Time Magazine refers to Hollywood as "That Place" without further identification . . . There's a cottage along the Lakeshore Highway with a sign that reads: "Glen Ireton." The Vitagraph press man is named Glenn Ireton. Maybe he runs a dance-and-dime joint as a sideline . . . They're cracking about the fellow who walked into a police station and complained: 'I've just been robbed. A guy stuck a gun into my side, jacked me up and stole my rubber heels!" . . . Then there's the yarn about the fellow who was saying he hated henpecked hubbies. 'Not me," he said. "When I get home the hot water must be ready or I give my wife plenty of heck. Without hot water I refuse to wash the floors!"

Trouble in "Heaven"

Much talked about in local film circles is a letter received from a clergyman in response to an invitation to attend a showing of Vitagraph's "One Foot in Heaven." The picture presented for the first time the personal problems of a preacher and won special affection from pious people. Three thousand members of the Christian Endeavour Society gathered in New York to honor Rev. Dr. Daniel A. Poling, who in turn paid tribute to motion pictures in general and the Warners in particular for "One Foot in Heaven."

All this meant little to the local minister. His answer to the invitation was full of impious vituperation. This time he substituted screed for creed. He suggested that one foot in heaven was not enough. You had to have both or none. Failing that you were a backslider.

Fortunately enough, most people of specific religious interests felt that the picture had added to their inspiration. Most people? This minister was the only one who, as far as the public prints reveal, felt that faith was being corrupted. The others were sure it would raise church attendance.

The cutest story heard about the picture is about the nice old lady who greeted the cashier with: "What time does the next service start?"

Cagneys Now On Their Own

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11 years, and brother William, as president, will handle the production end.

Long one of Hollywood's leading box office attractions, most of his films grossing over $1,000,000, Jimmy will star in at least two pictures a year, which he and William have contracted to produce for United Artists. The new company is backed by $6,000,000, an impressive tribute to the abilities of this actor-producer team which has within the past year made a fortune for Warner Bros. with such pictures as "Captains of the Clouds," "The Bride Came C.O.D." and "Strawberry Blonde."

In signing with United Artists, the Cagneys find themselves in the company of such film luminaries as Charles Chaplin, Alexander Korda and Mary Pickford, artists who have declared their independence from the big studios.

"We feel," said William Cagney, "that independent film production is the best of all fields for us today, and that its future is even more promising. Its rewards, aside from financial consideration, include freedom to select stories and casts of our own choosing, to arrange shooting schedules according to individual demands, and to achieve thereby perhaps a higher standard of box office entertainment."

Artkino Reissues Four

Artkino is reissuing a number of old Russian films to capitalize on the current interest in the Soviet Republic. Brought out of retirement are "Soviet Border," "We Are in Kronstadt," "Baltic Deputy" and "Three Women."

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Digest of Reviews

Vitagraph

KING'S ROW

Payoff: An engrossing drama about the inner lives of a variety of persons. There is excitement but it arises from the character, circumstances and environment of the subjects of the picture. **Broad and intensely human,** the picture, should be a **strong attraction** to adults of both sexes.

Story: Taken from a recent and much-read novel, the story rests for short periods on a number of older people in a small American town about the time the new century shows up, then fixes itself on the loves and ambitions of two intimate friends, Ronald Reagan and Robert Cummings. Due to parental opposition, vastly different in each case, both lose their childhood sweethearts but find happiness with others at the finish.

Sizeup: There are no theatrical or mass scenic sequences, nor is there physical action from clashes, but the conflict of personal lives seems to be an even more powerful substitute for these common cinema devices. The narrow views and straight-laced manners of the Victorians gets its usual criticism from the conduct of Charles Coburn, playing a sadistic doctor who becomes evil through his excessive measures against his conception of wickedness. In this same theme there is the fear of admitting publicly the existence of mental disorders in the family. The morbid parts of the story, arising from these ideas, are allowed to establish the background, then fade out and allow the young people to take over and work out their destinies.

Robert Cummings, as the young doctor interested in the new science of psychiatry, gives a fine performance and he is supported in expert style by Ronald Reagan and Ann Sheridan. Claude Rains, Betty Field, Judith Anderson, Nancy Coleman, Maria Ouspenskaya, Judith Anderson, Harry Davenport and Kaaren Verne all contribute in an outstanding way to what **is one of the best-acted pictures in a long time.**

Paramount

MY FAVORITE BLONDE

Payoff: A typical Bob Hope performance, which, in view of that young man's **boxoffice appeal,** guarantees its worthwhileness to the exhibitor.

Story: There isn't much plot. Hope is a small-time vaudevillian who travels with a penguin and becomes involved in the misadventures of Madeleine Carroll, a British agent who has a tough time delivering flying orders because of the Gestapo.

Sizeup: Hope throws his usual brittle cracks and Miss Carroll is as eye-appealing as ever. The picture is one long chase and Hope's scripted wit covers its lack of story developments. The audience, when not listening to Mr. Hope, is looking at Miss Carroll, and that will occupy it very well. There's a surprise shot of Bing Crosby.

Universal

THE STRANGE CASE OF DR. RX

Payoff: Another **scary medico murder** mystery. The players make something of it and it **should pass** with the less discriminating whodunites.

Story: Men are murdered and those who try to find cause and killer are returned aged and devitalized overnight. The killer is a phoney sawbones who is trying to smarten up his pet ape by transferring filched human brains to it. Sissy stuff, eh? Patric Knowles, a dick, is muscled into solving the case by mobsters.

Sizeup: The boys get in a tail-end session in which the loose ends, which should have been shown, are explained orally. In the cast are Lionel Atwill, this time one of the good guys, Anne Gwynne, Samuel S. Hinds, Mona Barrie, Shemp Howard and Paul Cavanaugh.

Universal

THE MAD DOCTOR OF MARKET STREET

Payoff: For the folks who like nightmares. **Plenty of morbid thrills.** Will cost the kids some sleep.

Story: Screwball scientist Lionel Atwill kills a subject of his experiments. He's trying to bring back the dead so that he can cure them of disease. Big things first, that's him. The cops have been watching his illegal actions so he scrams towards Australia, killing en route. The guy with the scythe beats the law to him on an island of savages.

Sizeup: Plenty of **action**—savages, a good shipwreck and airplane rescue. Una Merkel, Claire Dodd and Nat Pendelton share the fright charges.

Columbia

TRAMP, TRAMP, TRAMP

Payoff: Gleason and Durant aren't Abbott and Costello but they do very well in this **good small-budget service comedy.**

Story: Jackie Gleason and Jack Durant enlist in a home defense regiment. Into it come gangsters on the lam and the picture has to do with the cutups'—they're barbers—attempts to snare them.

Sizeup: It'll serve your laugh purposes. Florence Rice, Bruce Bennett and Mabel Todd help out.

Fox

A GENTLEMAN AT HEART

Payoff: A picture with **good names** and considerable comedy which **maintains interest throughout.**

Story: About phoney Old Masters and a government agent's attempts to tag the mob who are duplicating and peddling them.

Sizeup: Milton Berle carries the comedy in whirlwind fashion. Cast solidly with Cesare Romero, Carole Landis, J. Carroll Naish, Jerome Cowan and Elisha Cook, Jr.

New York Revivals

Arise My Love—1940 farce comedy; Colbert, R. Milland.

Blockade—1938 Spanish war melodrama; M. Carroll, H. Fonda.

Destry Rides Again—1939 comitragic western melodrama; Dietrich, J. Stewart.

Generals Without Buttons—1938 French film with Eng. subtitles.

His Girl Friday—1940 comedy; C. Grant, R. Russell.

Holiday—1938 comedy; Hepburn & C. Grant.

Jesse James—1939 western melodrama of the notorious bandit. T. Power, H. Fonda, N. Kelly.

King of Kings—1929. Life of Christ. H. B. Warner, J. Logan.

Lost Horizon—1937. Film dramatization of Hilton's novel; R. Colman, J. Wyatt.

Northwest Passage—1940 technicolor adventure tale; S. Tracy, Robt. Young, W. Brennan.

Meet John Doe—1941 drama; G. Cooper, B. Stanwyck.

Only Angels Have Wings—1939 aviation melodrama; C. Grant, J. Arthur.

Private Life of Henry VIII—1933 historical drama; C. Laughton.

Storm In a Teacup—1938 comedy; V. Leigh, R. Harrison.

Susan and God—1940 comedy-drama; F. March, J. Crawford.

Under Two Flags—1936 foreign legion drama; Colbert, R. Colman.

Wizard of Oz—1939 technicolor version of Baum's story; J. Garland, F. Morgan.

Film Board Plans Navy Picture

Joris Ivens, Netherands film director, has been invited to go to Ottawa to direct a feature-length film about the Royal Canadian Navy, the Netherlands Indies News Agency, Aneta, said today.

Ivens left yesterday to start work on the picture, which is expected to take between four and five months to produce. The invitation came from the National Film Board of Canada.

Ivens, a member of the arts and cinema faculty of the University of Southern California, has been working on a civilian defense film for the City of Los Angeles, produced by the U.S.C. cinema workshop.

Technicolor is Big Stuff Now

Loss of foreign markets may have caused some Hollywood studios to retrench and cut production schedules, but there's one phase of the industry that's booming at a rate 16 times that of a decade ago.

It's Technicolor. Twenty feature-length Technicolor pictures were produced in 1941, according to a report of Dr. Herbert T. Kalmus, president of Technicolor, Inc. Bookings for the first half of 1942 are maintaining the same high rate.

Positive print footage in 1941 was 97,014,757, compared with 80,632,168 in 1940 and contrasted with 5,526,128 feet in 1932.

"Besides these pictures for entertainment," Dr. Kilmus said, "Technicolor has been active in the photography and printing of pictures for the Government used in connection with defense and the training of personnel.

"Technicolor has been called upon by the Government to make prints for a number of pictures for use in its activities concerning education and public relations. 'Any Bonds Today' and 'The New Spirit' are illustrations of such films for the Treasury Department."

About the middle of 1940 Technicolor made a reduction of one cent a foot on positive prints shipped from the Hollywood plant for theatrical distribution. Despite increased taxes and labor wage rates, the company increased its net profit and paid dividends of $1 a share in 1941 compared with 75 cents in 1939.

Eight for Paramount April Schedule

Paramount has eight pictures ready for cameras this month. New starters are: "Wake Island," John Farrow directing Brian Donlevy and Robert Preston; "Triumph Over Pain," Joel McCrea and Betty Field megged by Preston Sturges; "Happy Go Lucky," Technicolor musical in which Curtis Bernhardt directs Mary Martin, Dick Powell and Rudy Vallee; "I Married a Witch," Fredric March and Veronica Lake directed by Rene Clair; "No Time for Love," Mitchell Leisen megging Claudette Colbert and Fred MacMurray; "Silver Queen," with George Brent, Priscilla Lane and Bruce Cabot under Lloyd Bacon's direction; "Lady Bodyguard," in which William Clemens megs Eddie Albert, and "Wrecking Crew," Frank McDonald directing Chester Morris, Richard Arlen and Jean Parker.

ECHOES and REFLECTIONS

CHICAGO SUN

(Screen critic Wolfe Kaufman writes about "The Mission of the Movies During the War")

I have seen so many horrible, silly, stupid and annoying little quickie movies which allegedly had some value that I am terribly annoyed with them. They do not help the war effort, and they do not help the propaganda need. It is my considered opinion that they hurt all around.

For many years the world at large has suffered from a plethora of second-rate or quickie pictures, sometimes identified as "B's." They are mostly cheaply made, sloppily put together, without stars, without originality and without merit. It is perfectly true that these pictures occasionally turn out to be quite entertaining in their own price level. It is further true that these films have served, in the past, to introduce new talent. But they are still, the great majority of them, simply time killers.

The horrible situation of doublebills which grew up around the country in spite of everything that anyone could say, made it mandatory to manufacture these cheap little films, to a great extent. The theatres needed product, a great deal of product. And these pictures took up time on the screen.

In this connection, there is an interesting tangent. Some newspapers make a practice of not reviewing these secondary, or "program" pictures. I have been told by some exhibitors that there is no need of reviewing them, or assaying them critically. Which is obvious nonsense, it seems to me.

The movie critic is a public servant. His job is to tell his readers what they are likely to see on the screen and whether or not they are likely to enjoy it, and to what extent. So long as people are asked to buy tickets sight unseen, in order to look at movies—just that long are they entitled to a critical and expert pre-judgment.

Well, to get back to the main thesis, the average program picture is a formula affair. Boy meets girl, etcetera, is the formula for big or small pictures, to a great extent. But the independent or program picture is usually even more rigidly a matter of a couple of guys named Joe and a gal named Jane.

Now, I don't object to this type of tripe, especially. I can't see any reason for it, but it does not especially rile me. Not until these pulp punchinellos get a cause. Or a phoney excuse for their ridiculous melodramatics.

I am thinking of one picture which I saw about six weeks ago and the name of which (being fortunate) I have forgotten. It dealt with a guy who was driving a truck on the Burma Road for the money it meant, and a gal who got between him and another guy. And then they all teamed up when they found out what all the shootin' was for, and joined hands to lick the nasty Japs by an easy huff and puff.

That picture infuriated me. It is allegedly propaganda, but it is actually nothing of the sort. Looking at it you are likely to say "Hooray for China," true enough. You are likely to hiss at the Japs, sure. But you are likely, also, to think that we will win this war in no time at all, by the simple process of sending over a few truck drivers and a couple of pretty girls to teach them the rules.

TORONTO DAILY STAR

(A letter in Jack Karr's "Movie-Go-Round")

"I have something I have to get off my chest," beefs M.P., Brooke Ave. "I go to theatres and see pictures that are not so very good and still they get praised and talked about and play for weeks while some that are very good are hardly talked about at all. This is especially so of 'The Great Waltz' which, in my opinion, is one of the best. I have seen it, believe it or not, 60 times . . . and still expect to see it! It got very little praise . . . and was billed at Loew's for only one week with another picture which was not good. . . . Since then it played at the Strand nine times, Oriole five times, and all smaller theatres over four times. . . . Most people I have talked to have seen it quite a few times. . . . This picture was release in October, 1938, and is still in demand. Parts are taken out, but it still plays."

YALE LITERARY MAGAZINE

(Sinclair Lewis in "A Double Life for Writers")

I suspect that in the future a writer will be able to make a respectable living only by toiling for the radio or Hollywood, and while there may arise geniuses who will be able to create enduring beauty and strength in those media, yet from what I know of those nimble arts, it is about as probable as to suppose that bran will presently become a tastier dish than grouse.

Hollywood Not Playing at War

Hollywood is not resting on its cinematic oars, content to serve only as a stimulator in America's all-out effort to win the war. The cinema city has emptied itself of some of its own top man power—a host of some 1,500 who have answer the call to arms.

With approximately that number having gone over the hill, as far as movies are concerned, it is estimated that five per cent of the total number of screen workers are now sweating and bleeding for their country.

This compares favorably with the percentage taken from other industries, and women are included in the count.

Not all of these who have answered the call to arms are "just soldiers." Many have rated commissions in the military and naval forces. And they come from all branches of the industry, and from every company, including Hal Roach, Monogram, Edward Small, Republic, Walt Disney, Leon Schlesinger, Universal, Paramount, Warner Bros., 20th Century-Fox, Columbia, Samuel Goldwyn, David O. Selznick, Alexander Korda and RKO-Radio.

The list includes actors, writers, directors, assistant directors, cameramen, producers, executives and others.

Locations include the California State Guard, both reserves, both air forces, the Marine Corps and some of the Canadian and foreign national services, plus various United States Government offices engaged in war endeavor.

Among actors are Lts. James Stewart, Robert Montgomery, Douglas Fairbanks Jr., Richard Barthelmess, Gene Raymond and Ronald Reagan; Ensigns Wayne Morris and Tony Martin, Lt. Commander Wallace Berry, Corp. Tockil Coogen and Pvt. Jeffrey Lynn, Burgess Meredith and Jeff York. The star list contains some 15 names.

Directors number Carson Kanin, Maj. Frank Capra, Lts. John Farrow and Leslie Fenton, Comdr. John Ford, Lt. Thornton Freeland, Lt. Leigh Jason, Maj. Paul Sloane and Maj. (retired) W. S. Van Dyke, making a total of nine "name" directors. Among assistants are Lt. William Helpern, Lt. Henry W. Silk Jr., Lt. Frederick Spencer and Capt. Paul R. Wing.

From the writing field came Lt. Sy Bartlett, Col. Harold Buckly, Capt. Richard Carroll, Capt. Harrion Jacobs, Capt. Robert Rigby, Lt. Comdr. Frank Wead and Lt. Col. Tristram Tupper. The writers contributed some 27, all told.

Why Managers Get Old Young

Harland Rankin, One of Them, Gives the Lowdown on the Foibles and Fancies of the Fickle Public — But, Maybe He's Just a Bit Touchy

Citizens who see the theatre manager as a bright, well-dressed and suave fellow who always has time to do a favor know nothing of the thousand-and-one things that plague him during the working day and follow him into his bed at night. The manager must be a man with molasses in his blood because he never loses his temper at the fancies of the filmgoers.

Harland Rankin, who supervises two Twentieth Century houses in Chatham, Ontario, in reply to a request from this department, has put down a few of the things that bring lines to the face and frost on the pumpkin.

"First of all," says Rankin, "there is the soldier who comes into the show with his heavy trench coat on and uses our checking facilities. So 50 soldiers with 50 coats do that and when they decide to leave each insists on a different coat. There is, about once a month, four or five coats left over. The manager takes these to the training centre where the bartering is carried on.

"Then the John Jones' come in. Mr. Jones lost a rosary that had been in the family for 70 years and he's sure he lost it in the show because that's the only place he has been. So we look for the rosary and get daily calls for a week.

"Next comes the man who lost the heirloom that holds his tie. We're lucky. We have it in the Lost and Found Department and when I saw it I wondered whether he was nuts or not. Neither one of us would wear it to a hog-calling contest.

THE CHILDREN, BLESS 'EM

"We have our darling little children under three years old—the biggest three-year old children I have ever seen. Their older sisters and brothers insist that the 'tots' have never had to pay for a show anywhere. Yours truly says 'Nothing doing, you must pay.'

"So they find the money between them—the money they intended using for chocolate bars—but tell the mother. She calls up and gives the manager an unhappy half-hour insisting that the children shouldn't have paid. The mystery is why they send the wee ones to a show they can't understand. Anyway, it's worth a small admission to run a nursery and keep them safely off the streets.

"But mother still thinks she knows best and after catching my third breath I gradually get her to see something in our attitude.

"We have the persistently annoying child whose mother lets it crawl up and down the aisle so that she can enjoy the show in peace. After many complaints the mother is sent to the office with the child. I find that the child is mentally deficient and shouldn't have been brought to the show but you can't tell this to the mother. She thinks the child is being picked on and some day will gain its normal mental strength.

"I buy the child an all-day sucker and send them upstairs. The child falls down a few steps and the mother is mad because we sent her upstairs. Finally I give the mother a refund ticket and drive her home with a sigh of relief.

"That over with, a child turns up with a toothache. He was left with us while mother attends to her shopping. I put some painkiller on a toothpick and drop it on the aching tooth but some gets on the tongue and the child screams that I am trying to torture him. About then mother gets back and accuses me of mistreating the child. She takes him in her arms and rushes out of the theatre.

THERE ARE OTHERS

"And that isn't all. I place a teaser ad in the paper for a coming picture. All is says is 'Hello Sucker.' But the paper places it right above a Red Cross appeal and the complaint department at the newspaper gets busy. The paper explains that it's a teaser ad for our house. So our phone gets the next call. I explain that we are running the picture for morning salvage shows for the war effort. One morning for the children of the Separate schools and the next morning for those from the Public schools.

"The Separate school children get their pictures taken for the paper. But the Public school kids think they are being slighted so the old peacemaker has to get busy again.

"Then we put on a Sunday evening charity show and a preacher jumps down our throats, calling us tyrants and threatening us with the Lord's Day Alliance. All this in spite of the fact that we raised $120.00 for the Ladies Auxiliary. To prove to the complainants that we are not pagans we insert a 220-line ad in the Saturday church page of the newspaper, asking the people to go to church on the morrow and telling them that 'The Church is the Hope of the World' and that 'We Must Cling to It Now for Strength and Guidance.'

ALWAYS HOT FOR THE MANAGER

"A patron comes out and says, 'My, it's hot in there!' So we rush down and turn on the cool air fans. They're on about two minutes when a man in the centre of the house hurries back and complains, 'Where is all the draught coming from?' He feels it on his spacious bald head so we turn the fans off. That brings us a nice farmer lad, who has on heavy woollen underwear, with a complaint about the heat. We notice the bald-headed man leaving so we give the farmer lad his way and turn off the heat. A minute later in comes Mrs. Jones, with her mosquito-net dress on, shivering and shaking and complaining that she is freezing to death.

"Just last week a chap took a fit and I took him to three doctors before finding one in. I had to carry him into the car and office. He was really sick. My suit is still hanging in the garage.

"We are forever having candy machine trouble. The children claim their nickels went in and nothing came out. So we make it up to them and pray that the kids were right when the machine is checked.

"Paging people is another irksome task. We are forever asking for sweethearts, doctors, nurses, children, car-parkers, etc. The boys are tired of the sound of their own voices.

"But, in spite of it all, we are able to take it—and like it."

Good Campaign Idea For MGM's "Woman"

Dewey Bloom of Regal spread a keep campaign around Toronto for MGM's "Woman of the Year" and its highlight was the local balloting to pick Toronto's "Woman of the Year." This idea can easily be repeated anywhere and is a sure hook for feminine interest. "Woman of the Year," with Katharine Hepburn, is picture with special appeal to women, though the presence of Spencer Tracy is a guarantee of masculine patronage.

"Gossip," a magazine, asked Toronto women to make their choices and printed a ballot. The ladies sent them back in large numbers. The balloting was close and three ladies shared the distinction. They were honored with a banquet at the Royal York Hotel and invited to see the premiere showing. The newspapers were glad to give space to a picture and a story.

Katharine Hepburn noted the choices and sent the editor of "Gossip" a congratulatory telegram in which she extended her best wishes to Toronto's choices.

Disney Renews

Walt Disney has renewed his contract with RKO for the release of his short subjects. He's agreed to deliver 26 Technicolor cartoons per season instead of the previous 18.

Disney will include his South American shorts as well as reviving Silly Symphonies.

Paper Rationing Threatens Publicity

The press buildup for pictures will suffer when the purported newsprint restrictions in the United States go into effect. Though Canada has been at war for several years, nothing has been done along these lines on this side of the border.

Big-town papers will suffer most, with much of the slashing being done on thick Sunday editions. Departments outside of news and advertising will be the first to go.

It may mean greater use of the radio and increased promotional efforts by exhibitors.

Coe to Hays Office

At the recent annual meeting of the Motion Picture Producers and Distributors Association Will Hays was re-elected president for the 21st consecutive year. With the exception of Edward C. Raferty, who was elected to the board as representative of United Artists, all other directors were sent back.

Charles Francis Coe, lawyer and novelist, was appointed assistant to the president.

Zanuck's Present

Lieut. Col. Darryl Zanuck has presented his string of six polo ponies to the USA cavalry. They're worth $25,000 but the army paid the nominal sum of one dollar each for them.

"HARD men win battles. Free men win wars." There is a parallel.

In managing a theatre or campaigning a war, in any endeavor, be a "free man" and not a "hard man." Keep in constant touch with this column. Talk with us and speak freely. We can help each other.

Bring us your suggestions. Your original ideas, no matter how small and unimportant you think they are, can very often be molded into something valuable.

The swap idea has helped many. Make this your swap department and exchange your ideas with the rest of the managers. Loosen up and let your creative forces hold sway.

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HERE'S two real wartime saving ideas from that lively Stewart Gillespie of the Marks, Oshawa. You ought to try them.

After your flashlight batteries have become dead, place on the floor under a radiator for two or three days. When they have become dried out thoroughly they can be used for at least another two weeks.

Another good plan to save carbons is this: Take a hollow brass curtain rod—it can be bought for 15 cents—cut it into eight or nine pieces and place four negative and positive butts in it. That will enable you to burn your carbons down to about three-quarters of an inch. The short ends left over can be pounded into a powder, enabling you to remove the copper coating for salvage.

Red Cross Film By Associated

Brief sequences on two studio sets completed shooting for the forthcoming Red Cross motion picture in production by Associated Screen Studios at Montreal. One was a German prison camp set, illustrating distribution of Red Cross food parcels to our boys who are prisoners of war behind the enemy lines. Frank McIntosh, Bob Goodier and boys of Royal Montreal Regiment and No. 1 Wireless School, R.C.A.F., took part in these sequences.

The other set duplicated a Red Cross First Aid post in England, with bombed-out mother and child receiving kindly attention of the nurse in charge. Interested spectators during shooting on these sets were Colonel R. S. McLaughlin of Oshawa, who is sponsoring the picture as a contribution to the work of the Red Cross, and Jackson Dodds, chairman of the Central Council, Canadian Red Cross Society.

The picture, as yet untitled, is scheduled for completion in about a month's time.

ON "Defense of Moscow," that very timely Russian documentary film which has time by the forelock, Bill Cupples, Grand, Sudbury, arranged a five-minute radio program at the supper hour. He used appropriate Russian music as a background. Bill had four boys parading with cards, each of which bore one word of the title. The fourth card had the date and theatre on it. The boys wandered around busy parts of the town and the stunt paid off well.

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LEO COYLE of the Granada, St. Catharines, also had "Defense of Moscow." Leo placed window cards in the Russian section and had two radio spots. This is a picture which, though really a short, lends itself to timely and startling exploitation. The public is hot for a sight of the scampering Nazi and this one has plenty to warm the heart of all true Fascist-haters.

Incidentally, Leo's Victory Legion, in which the kids bring small scrap for the big scrap, is the livest idea in a long time and happily serves the government in an enormously important way. No manager should ignore it. It is almost a duty to put into effect such a worthy plan.

Second-hand goods make first-hand weapons.

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NO fool on April Fool was Tom Early, assistant manager of the Centre, Chatham. Tom looked into the Lost and Found Department and found an idea. What do most people lose? Purses. What do people forget to call for? Purses. Most of them had been there over six months. So Tom put a note in each and dropped them from one end of the main street to the other. The note said: "This is no April Fool. See 'Blues in the Night' now playing at the Centre Theatre."

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RALPH TIEDE, Geneva, Orillia, cornered the moppet custom on a Saturday matinee by handing out comic books. In the books were heralds for "Sierra Sue." The heralds were promoted from a local supply store which carried school stuff. Prizes were offered for coloring one of the pages in the comic book—ten of them—with the instructions pasted in each book.

That's how to get the most out of the least expenditure.

HERE'S how one manager tried his blackout rehearsal. Each employee was given definite instructions.

Cashier: (1) Block the opening of the ticket window. (2) Buzz three times for signal. (3) Draw black curtains across window. (4) Change boxoffice. (5) Open emergency boxoffice inside and remain at post.

Doorman: (1) Turn off outside lights. (2) Pull down notice outside of boxoffice. (3) Pull black curtains across doors and remain at post.

Ushers: (1) Walk down aisles quickly and quietly. (2) Turn off outside lights, pull inside curtains and stand at exits ready to open doors if necessary.

Operator: (1) Check all windows to see that they are closed. (2) Put on emergency lights if power goes off. (3) Pull all switches if power goes off.

A window blind bearing the words: "Emergency Boxoffice Inside" should be attached to the main boxoffice.

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MEL STEPHENS, Granada, Dunnville, gets the most out of his newsreel by typing copies of the letter which precedes it and distributing them in barber shops, cafes, etc. Thus the customers can read about the nature of the news, the time of showings and so on. The rest of the program is also featured.

Requests have come in for additional copies, which Mel delivers personally. The people are appreciating this service.

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MISS Ella Shields, the famed Burlington Bertie of Britain, made a personal appearance at the Grand, London. Doug Keyes accompanied by the Mayor and members of the City Council, met her at the station and accompanied her on various visits. She gave performances in hospitals and Air Force schools.

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A NUMBER of stock stunts worth repeating have been in action. Lloyd Gurr of the Century Hamilton, is still tieing up windows for his pictures, his latest being based on "Song of the Islands." Pete Harrison of the Capitol, Cobourg, used the telephone pass-prize gag to all answering "Hellzapoppin" when the theatre phoned and Tony Mascaro of the Capitol, Belleville, got music and display space for "Blues in the Night."

BILL PAYNE, Granada, St. Thomas, had the new special, "No Greater Sin," a picture which must be promoted discreetly because it deals with a subject long considered too delicate for public mention—social disease.

Bill did it right. He invited press, clergy and the medical profession to a private screening held two days before the regular showing. All were impressed and promised help in spreading word of this splendid and instructvie picture. The picture won three news stories in the paper.

Heralds were left in the Air schools and the medical officers placed notices on the bulletin boards advising the men to see the picture. Cards were placed in munition factories, a special front was erected and an interesting display placed in the lobby.

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THROUGH the courtesy of Bob Berezin of the Elgin, Ottawa, the Lion's Club gave a children's matinee of cartoons for the orphaned boys and girls of the city.

On "Jungle Boy" Bob is getting in some high-class licks. Several hundred Boy Scouts will parade along the main streets to the theatre. The Cubs originated through Kipling's "Jungle Book" so this ties in perfectly.

Warners Features For Uptown, Toronto

Announcement has been made by Wolfe Cohen, vice-president of Vitagraph, that two Warner Bros. features have been set for the Uptown, Toronto. This marks the first time Burbank product has been booked into this house since Loew's resumed operation several months ago.

"All Thru the Night," timely spy meller, with a gangland vs. Gestapo theme and starring Humphrey Bogart and featuring among others Conrad Veidt, Kaaren Verne and Peter Lorre will open there on April 17th. "Dangerously They Live," with John Garfield in the top spot, will follow a few weeks later. The latter film was recently coast-to-coasted by a CBC dramatization. It concerns activities of British Intelligence in the United States and Newfoundland in protecting convoys of the United Nations.

Another Disney Musicfest

Walt Disney is preparing another feature on the pattern of "Fantasia." Musical numbers chosen around which to build story are DeBussy's "Claire de Lune"; Prokofieff's "Peter and the Wolf"; Carpenter's "Adventures in a Perambulator," and Von Weber's "Invitation to the Waltz."

Snips and Snaps . . .

Lovely Lounger

FAITH DORN — is probably the only actress in Hollywood to be signed by a studio because of her performance in a church play, the Christmas pageant presented by the students of St. Monica's school in Santa Monica, California. A motion picture agent, impressed by the beauty and charm of the sixteen-year-old girl, made arrangements with her parents for a screen test which resulted in a long term Warner contract. Faith is five feet six inches tall and weighs 116 pounds. She was born in New Orleans, Louisiana and French, Irish and Spanish blood flows through her veins. She has the dark eyes and hair of a senorita, the dimples and smile of a petite mademoiselle, and the enthusiasm of a young colleen.

Roughhousers

This free-for-all scramble between Ray McDonald, Leo Gorcey and Larry Nunn is in "Born to Sing," MGM musical drama.

New Faces

MGM answers the old cry for new screen faces with Barry Nelson, teamed for the first time with Laraine Day. They're together in "A Yank on the Burma Road."

The Lady of the Lake — in Four Episodes

A day in the life of Veronica Lake, the lady with the long hair—and that ain't all. After being portraitured by Bradshaw Crandall, she gets in knitting for the Marines, then goes to work opposite Alan Ladd and Laird Cregar in "This Gun For Hire."